



Calgary

Weekly Newscasts Lesson Plan

November 9, 2015

Newscasts are current news stories read at a slower pace than you might hear on the radio.
These are prepared by CBC news editor Brian Labby.

Objectives:

- To develop listening skills
- To increase vocabulary
- To increase awareness of grammatical structures and functional language
- To increase knowledge of current events
- To provide a user-friendly, self-study tool for learners, as well as ESL classroom resource for instructors

Contents:

Three news stories are featured in each weekly lesson plan. Each lesson contains vocabulary and listening comprehension activities. At the end of each lesson, you will find a complete transcript and an answer key. This lesson plan is aimed towards learners at an intermediate language level (i.e. Canadian Language Benchmarks 4-5 or equivalent).



Learning English with CBC is a joint project with CBC Calgary, CBC Edmonton, and the Government of Alberta.
Lesson Plan prepared by Kathleen Hall and Deidre Lake, Communication4Integration Inc.

NEWS STORY 1

FRANTIC RESCUE OF STRANDED WHALES ON FRENCH BEACH



Photo Source: <http://www.cbc.ca/news/world/frantic-rescue-of-stranded-whales-on-french-beach-1.3300054>

GENERAL WARM-UP ACTIVITY

Look at the title of the news story, and the picture above. What do you think the news story is about?

VOCABULARY BUILDING ACTIVITY 1: CREATING AWARENESS

Look at the words and phrases below. Circle the ones you do not know.

came across

stranded

rescuers

scene

frantic

launched

protection

hydrated

VOCABULARY BUILDING ACTIVITY 2: DEVELOPING KNOWLEDGE

Before you listen to the news story, look at the words/expressions below and their meanings. These will help you to understand the listening more easily.

WORD or PHRASE	MEANING/SYNONYM
came across	discovered, noticed
stranded	stuck, trapped
rescuers	saviors
scene	sight, view
frantic	panicked, anxious
launched	started, began
protection	guard, safeguard
hydrated	kept wet, dampened, soaked

VOCABULARY BUILDING ACTIVITY 3: PUTTING KNOWLEDGE INTO PRACTICE

Complete the following sentences with words or phrases from the left side of the table above:

1. Fire fighters and other _____ saved many people after the earthquake.
2. I _____ a 10-dollar bill in my pocket.
3. When exercising, it is important to keep _____ to prevent your body from overheating.
4. We bought an alarm system for _____ against burglars.
5. We were _____ for 4 hours in the snowstorm.
6. They were _____ when they could not find their child in the park.
7. The city _____ a new road repair project.
8. The leaves were many different colours. It was a beautiful _____ .

(See the answer key for answers)

LISTENING ACTIVITY 1: LISTENING FOR COMPREHENSION.

Listen to News Story 1. Listen for overall comprehension. Use the following questions to help you:

1. Where was the woman walking?
2. What did she see on the beach?
3. How many whales were on the beach?
4. How many were alive when rescuers arrived?
5. Where were the 4 whales returned to?

(See the answer key for answers)

Listening Activity 2: Listening for specific purposes

Listen again. This time fill in the blanks below with what you hear.

A woman walking along the beach in France suddenly _____ 10 _____ whales. By the time _____ got to the _____, only 4 of them were still alive. A _____ effort to save the whales was _____ by an animal _____ group. The whales were kept _____ as teams brought in heavy equipment. All four were successfully returned to the ocean.

(See the answer key for answers)

NEWS STORY 2

PAY OFF YOUR MORTGAGE, LIVE DEBT FREE: HOW ONE GUY DID IT IN 3 YEARS



Photo

Source: <http://www.cbc.ca/news/business/mortgage-pay-off-three-years-1.3302229>

GENERAL WARM-UP ACTIVITY

Do you rent or own your home? Are houses more or less expensive compared to your country?

VOCABULARY BUILDING ACTIVITY 1: CREATING AWARENESS

There are some difficult words and phrases in the news story. Look at the words and phrases below. They are paired with sentences that use synonyms or phrases with the same meaning. Based on the context clues from the sentences, try to understand their meaning.

WORDS AND PHRASES	CONTEXT SENTENCES WITH SYNONYMS, OR PHRASES WITH THE SAME MEANING
achieved	He did what he wanted to do. He succeeded in his goal.
aspire	He hoped and wished to be an actor.
embarked upon	She began the process to learn English in a year.
painstaking	She was very careful to pay attention to every detail.
pauper	A very poor person was trying to save enough money for food.
mortgage	They took a large loan for a home from the bank.
driven by	She was pushed by a desire to be in the Olympics.
deep desire	He had a strong need to bring his family to Canada.
debt	He borrowed money from all of his friends, and now he owes money to everyone he knows.
life sentence	The punishment would have made them suffer for the rest of their lives.
hanging over one's head	She could not sleep because the test on Friday was worrying her.

(See the answer key for answers)

VOCABULARY BUILDING ACTIVITY 2: DEVELOPING KNOWLEDGE

Now complete the following sentences with vocabulary from the left side of the box above. Do not forget to change the tense or pluralize when needed.

1. He was worried about his _____ to the bank. It was _____.
2. The soccer team was driven by a _____ to win the World Cup.
3. They had _____ to _____ this goal for many years.
4. She had worked at a job she hated for years. It seemed like a _____.
5. They did not have any money as students. They lived like _____.
(See the answer key for answers)

LISTENING ACTIVITY 1: LISTENING FOR COMPREHENSION

Listen to News Story 2. Listen for overall comprehension

LISTENING ACTIVITY 2: LISTENING FOR SPECIFIC PURPOSES

Listen again. This time pay attention to the numbers you hear. You will hear the numbers 3 and 30 more than once referring to different things. Fill in the table with what the numbers refer to:

NUMBER	WHAT THE NUMBER REFERS TO
2012	
425,000	
225,000	
3	
3	
30	
30	

(See the answer key for answers)

LISTENING ACTIVITY 3: FILL IN THE BLANKS

Listen again. This time fill in the blanks below with what you hear.

Sean Cooper has _____ what many Canadians _____ to do: pay off our home. He just did it faster than most of us. In 2012 Cooper bought a house in Toronto for \$425,000.

He then _____ on a _____ financial plan—that included working three jobs and living like a _____ to pay off his \$225,000 _____ as soon as possible. He _____ his goal in just three years and two months—at the age of 30.

Cooper was _____ by a _____ to free himself from the stress and risks of _____. Cooper said in an interview with CBC, “For a lot of people, their mortgage is like a _____. I just didn’t want a mortgage _____ for the next 30 years.”

(See the answer key for answers)

NEWS STORY 3

KENT HEHR—A NEW MEMBER OF THE FEDERAL CABINET



Photo Source: <http://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/calgary/kent-hehr-cabinet-calgary-liberal-trudeau-1.3303439>

GENERAL WARM-UP ACTIVITY

Are you interested in politics? Why or why not?

LISTENING ACTIVITY 1: LISTENING FOR SPECIFIC VOCABULARY

Before you listen to the news story, look at the words and acronyms below. Listen carefully for these words in the newscast. Make a checkmark when you hear the word or the acronym:

Word /Acronym	
federal	✓
cabinet	
incoming	
sworn	
MP	
MLA	

VOCABULARY ACTIVITY 1: DETERMINING MEANING FROM CONTEXT

Now that you have heard how these words, expressions and acronyms are used in the news story, choose the best synonyms or definitions for these terms as they are used in the story. The first one is done as an example.

Answer	Word/Expression	Synonyms/Definitions
A	federal	A. National, countrywide B. A supporter of federation C. A style of American architecture, furniture
	cabinet	A. Cupboard, or dresser B. A small private room C. Persons appointed by a head of state or a prime minister
	incoming	A. Next, new B. Homeward bound, arriving C. Received
	sworn	A. Cursed B. Claimed C. Took an oath
	MP	A. Military Police B. Member of Parliament C. Mega Pixel
	MLA	A. Medical Laboratory Assistant B. Member of Legislative Assembly C. Malta Airport

(See the answer key for answers)

LISTENING ACTIVITY 2: LISTENING FOR SPECIFIC INFORMATION

Complete the following sentence with information from the newscast.

1. Kent Hehr is now a member of the new _____.
2. He is a Calgary Liberal _____.
3. He made the trip to Ottawa on November 4th with the _____ prime minister, Justin Trudeau.
4. Hehr is to be _____ into cabinet.
5. Hehr is a former Alberta _____.

(See the answer key for answers)

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

What do you know about your city, provincial and federal government? Do you know who the mayor is? Do you know who your MLA and MP are?

LANGUAGE FOCUS: INTRODUCTION TO THE GRAMMAR OF PHRASAL VERBS

Phrasal verbs and other multi-word verbs are an important part of the English language. We heard phrasal verbs in the newscasts this week.

A phrasal verb is a verb followed by a prepositional **particle** (or an adverb, or both); and has a different meaning from the original verb alone.

The reason we call the preposition a **particle** is because it does not have the usual meaning of the preposition. For example, if I said “Look up at the moon”, you would look up  toward the sky. If I were to say “Look up the word in the dictionary”, you would not look up. 

Phrasal verbs have some grammatical rules outlined in the box below:

Transitive and intransitive phrasal verbs:

Some phrasal verbs are transitive. (A transitive verb always has an object.) Example: He came down with a cold (a cold is the object of the phrasal verb.)

Some phrasal verbs are intransitive. (An intransitive verb does not have an object.)

Example: The truth comes out.

Separable or inseparable phrasal verbs:

Some transitive phrasal verbs are separable. (The object is between the verb and the preposition.) Most separable phrasal verbs can take an object in both places.

Example : The cold season drove food prices up

The cold season drove up food prices.

Food prices is the object. It can go between the verb and the prepositional particle, or after the prepositional particle.

With very few phrasal verbs, such as “tell apart”, the object must go between the verb and prepositional particle.

NOTE: With a separable phrasal verb, a pronoun (such as he, she, they, or it) **cannot** come after the prepositional particle. It **must** be between the verb and prepositional particle.

Example : The cold weather drove them up.

NOT: The cold weather drove up them.

Some transitive phrasal verbs are inseparable. (The object can only be placed after the preposition.)

Example: He swore off fast food. (Fast food is the object; it **cannot** be placed between the verb and prepositional particle.)

Language Focus: Activity 1

Now that we know that some phrasal verbs are followed by an object, and some are not, and that some phrasal verbs are separable and some are not, look at the table below to see which are followed by an object, and which are separable.

Phrasal Verb	Meaning	Object	Separable
come out	to appear, to be seen	no	no
come around	to change one's mind, to change one's opinion, agree	no	no
come down on	to scold or punish	yes	no
come up with	to produce or supply	yes	no
come to (someone)	remember or recall	yes	no
come about	to happen	no	no
come across	to find	yes	no
come down with	to become sick	yes	no
drive away	to force an animal or someone to leave a place	yes	yes
drive back	to repulse or force back	yes	yes
drive by	to do something in or from a car	no	no
drive off	to drive away from a place	no	no
drive out	to force someone to leave a place	no	yes
drive up	to make something increase	no	yes
swear in	to make someone give a formal promise in a law court or at an official ceremony	no	yes
swear at	to use rude or offensive language directed at someone, or something	yes	no
swear off	to promise that you will not do or use something again	yes	no
swear to	to make a serious promise to do something	no	yes
swear to	to say that something is definitely true	yes	no
swear on	to make a public or official promise, especially in court	yes	no
swear by	to be certain that something is good or useful	yes	no

Language Focus: Activity 2

Look at the meaning of the phrasal verbs in the table above, and complete the following sentence with phrasal verbs from the table. Do not forget to change the tense of the verb if necessary.

1. My uncle doesn't want to move to Canada, but I think he will _____
_____.
2. I couldn't remember where I parked my car, but it suddenly _____ me
that I had taken the bus.
3. Last night I _____ my old photographs. I haven't seen them in
years.
4. I haven't had the flu for years. I hope I don't _____ it
this year.
5. Their bad service _____ customers _____.
6. The police _____ the crowd _____ to give the rescue workers more space.
7. Kent Hehr was injured in a _____ shooting.
8. I wanted to return her books, but she _____ in her car too quickly.
9. To stay healthy he _____ fruits and vegetables.
10. 30 Cabinet Ministers were _____ this week.

(See the answer key for answers)

CBC CALGARY TRANSCRIPTS OF WEEKLY NEWSCASTS

	WEEKLY NEWS STORIES	TIME
Introduction	Hi. This is Brian Labby. You're listening to Learning English with CBC for the week of November 9th.	0:00
Newscast 1 <i>Frantic rescue of stranded whales on French beach</i>	A woman walking along the beach in France suddenly came across 10 stranded whales. By the time rescuers got to the scene, only 4 of them were still alive. A frantic effort to save the whales was launched by an animal protection group. The whales were kept hydrated as teams brought in heavy equipment. All four were successfully returned to the ocean.	0:05
Newscast 2 <i>Pay off your mortgage, live debt free: how one guy did it in 3 years</i>	Sean Cooper has achieved what many Canadians aspire to do: pay off our home. He just did it faster than most of us. In 2012 Cooper bought a house in Toronto for \$425,000. He then embarked upon on a painstaking financial plan—that included working three jobs and living like a pauper to pay off his \$225,000 mortgage as soon as possible. He achieved his goal in just three years and two months—at the age of 30. Cooper was driven by a deep desire to free himself from the stress and risks of debt. Cooper said in an interview with CBC, “For a lot of people, their mortgage is like a life sentence. I just didn’t want a mortgage hanging over my head for the next 30 years.”	0:27
Newscast 3 <i>Kent Hehr—a new member of the federal cabinet</i>	Kent Hehr is now a member of the new federal cabinet. He is a Calgary Liberal MP—one of the first elected from Calgary since 1968. He was among the many men and women who made the trip to Ottawa on November 4 th with incoming prime minister Justin Trudeau to be sworn into cabinet. Hehr, a lawyer and popular former Alberta MLA, defeated Conservative Joan Crockatt by just 906 votes in Calgary—Centre in the federal election on October 19 th . When asked by CBC News how it felt to be in cabinet. Hehr replied, “It is awesome, man. It is very cool to be here. It’s an honour to be here in Ottawa to be part of a national government and to have a role that is meaningful to me and the citizens of Calgary.”	1:14

ANSWER KEY FOR NEWS STORY 1: FRANTIC RESCUE OF STRANDED WHALES ON FRENCH BEACH

VOCABULARY BUILDING ACTIVITY 3: PUTTING KNOWLEDGE INTO PRACTICE

1. Fire fighters and other rescuers saved many people after the earthquake.
2. I came across a 10-dollar bill in my pocket.
3. When exercising, it is important to keep hydrated to prevent your body from overheating.
4. We bought an alarm system for protection against burglars.
5. We were stranded for 4 hours in the snowstorm.
6. They were frantic when they could not find their child in the park.
7. The city launched a new road repair project.
8. The leaves were many different colours. It was a beautiful scene.

LISTENING ACTIVITY 1: LISTENING FOR COMPREHENSION

1. Where was the woman walking? On the beach (in France)
2. What did she see on the beach? Whales
3. How many whales were on the beach? 10
4. Of the 10 whales, how many were alive when rescuers arrived? 4
5. Where were the 4 whales returned to? The ocean

LISTENING ACTIVITY 2: LISTENING FOR SPECIFIC PURPOSES

A woman walking along the beach in France suddenly came across 10 stranded whales. By the time rescuers got to the scene, only 4 of them were still alive. A frantic effort to save the whales was launched by an animal protection group. The whales were kept hydrated as teams brought in heavy equipment. All four were successfully returned to the ocean.

**ANSWER KEY FOR NEWS STORY 2:
PAY OFF YOUR MORTGAGE, LIVE DEBT FREE: HOW ONE GUY DID IT IN 3 YEARS**

VOCABULARY BUILDING ACTIVITY 2: DEVELOPING KNOWLEDGE

1. He was worried about his debt to the bank. It was hanging over his head.
2. The soccer team was driven by a deep desire to win the World Cup.
3. They had aspired to achieve this goal for many years.
4. She had worked at a job she hated for years. It seemed like a life sentence.
5. They did not have any money as students. They lived like paupers.

LISTENING ACTIVITY 2: LISTENING FOR SPECIFIC PURPOSES

Listen again. This time pay attention to the numbers you hear. You will hear the numbers 3 and 30 more than once referring to different things. Fill in the table with what the numbers refer to:

NUMBER	WHAT THE NUMBER REFERS TO
2012	Year he bought the house
425,000	Total of the house cost
225,000	Amount of the mortgage
3	Number of jobs he worked
3	Number of years to pay off the mortgage
30	Age when he paid off the mortgage
30	Next 30 years

LISTENING ACTIVITY 3: FILL IN THE BLANKS

Listen again. This time fill in the blanks below with what you hear.

Sean Cooper has achieved what many Canadians aspire to do: pay off our home. He just did it faster than most of us. In 2012 Cooper bought a house in Toronto for \$425,000.

He then embarked upon on a painstaking financial plan—that included working three jobs and living like a pauper to pay off his \$225,000 mortgage as soon as possible. He achieved his goal in just three years and two months—at the age of 30.

Cooper was driven by a deep desire to free himself from the stress and risks of debt. Cooper said in an interview with CBC, “For a lot of people, their mortgage is like a life sentence. I just didn’t want a mortgage hanging over my head for the next 30 years.”

**ANSWER KEY FOR NEWS STORY 3:
KENT HEHR—A NEW MEMBER OF THE FEDERAL CABINET**

VOCABULARY ACTIVITY 1: DETERMINING MEANING FROM CONTEXT

Answer	Word/Expression	Synonyms/Definitions
A	federal	A. National, countrywide B. A supporter of federation C. A style of American architecture, furniture
C	cabinet	A. Cupboard, or dresser B. A small private room C. Persons appointed by a head of state or a prime minister
A	incoming	A. Next, new B. Homeward bound, arriving C. Received
C	sworn	A. Cursed B. Claimed C. Took an oath
B	MP	A. Military Police B. Member of Parliament C. Mega Pixel
B	MLA	A. Medical Laboratory Assistant B. Member of Legislative Assembly C. Malta Airport

LISTENING ACTIVITY 3: LISTENING FOR SPECIFIC INFORMATION

1. Kent Hehr is now a member of the new federal cabinet.
2. He is a Calgary Liberal MP.
3. He made the trip to Ottawa on November 4th with the incoming prime minister, Justin Trudeau.
4. Hehr is to be sworn into cabinet.
5. Hehr is a former Alberta MLA.

LANGUAGE FOCUS: ACTIVITY 2

1. My uncle doesn't want to move to Canada, but I think he will come around.
2. I couldn't remember where I parked my car, but it suddenly came to me that I had taken the bus.
3. Last night I came across my old photographs. I haven't seen them in years.
4. I haven't had the flu for years. I hope I don't come down with it this year.
5. Their bad service drives customers away.
6. The police drove the crowd back to give the rescue workers more space.
7. Kent Hehr was injured in a drive-by shooting.
8. I wanted to return her books, but she drove off in her car too quickly.
9. To stay healthy he sweats by fruits and vegetables.
10. 30 Cabinet Ministers were sworn in this week.